



Summary of Council on Children's Mental Health Purpose and Activities to Date

March 25, 2009

Public Chapter 1062 passed in 2008 which established a Council on Children's Mental Health (CCMH) to design a plan for a statewide system of mental health care for children. It requires the CCMH to develop a plan for a statewide system of care where children's mental health services are child-centered, family-driven, and culturally and linguistically competent, and provides a coordinated system of care for children's mental health needs in the state.

The Council is co-chaired by the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Executive Director of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.

The plan created by the Council must:

- Provide a service delivery system that focuses on the principles of care for a system of care and enumerates those principles;
- Include a core set of services and supports that appropriately and effectively address the mental health needs of children and families;
- Develop a financial resource map and cost analysis of all federal and state funded programs for children's mental health, updated on an annual basis, to guide and support the plan.

Implementation of the plan is staggered:

- Three demonstration sites by July 2010 for inclusion in 2011 budget (East, West, Middle);
- 10 sites by July 2012 if the initial plan is funded;
- A statewide system by 2013 if prior plans are funded.

Other Council duties include stimulating more effective use of resources, assisting in developing interagency agreements, determining whether programs are evidence-based, research-based and theory-based and submitting those findings.

The Council is comprised of approximately 60 representatives from all child-serving state agencies, legislature, Governor's Office, Comptroller's Office, advocacy groups, non-profits, providers, managed care companies, higher education, community members, parents of children with mental health disorders, and other key stakeholders.

Since its inception, the Council has held five meetings. Activities of the Council were first focused on organizational matters, but then quickly turned to substantive concerns about children's mental health beginning with the first meeting. In that and subsequent meetings, the CCMH has explored a wide range of issues and activities relevant to the legislation, among them:

- SJR 799 inclusive of its history, town hall meetings, workgroup processes and products,
- Recommendations and legislative outcome;
- Programs and priorities of the major child-serving state departments;
- Numerous activities occurring statewide and nationally that can inform and influence the CCMH;
- The state's experience with systems of care to date;
- Issues which rose to a level of visibility because of emergent conditions that warranted the Council's attention.

In between Council meetings, workgroups have met regularly to help the CCMH move forward efficiently, focused on:

- Accountability and Management Information Systems;
- Funding;
- Interagency Collaboration;
- Comprehensive Service Array;
- Cultural and Linguistic Competency;
- Evidence-based Services;
- Media Relations.

On February 1, 2009, the Council submitted its first report to the legislature, which discussed in detail the activities outlined above. A copy of the full report can be obtained by visiting the following link: <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/ccmh-report09.pdf>.

Moving forward, the CCMH will meet in March 2009 and every two months thereafter through June 2010 or more often as needed to complete a plan by July 2010. Workgroups will continue to meet as necessary to support the Council's agendas and development of the plan for a statewide system of care. Additionally, a training focused on funding systems of care will be provided to the CCMH by a national expert, Sheila Pires, in April 2009.

For more information about the Council on Children's Mental Health, please visit the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's CCMH webpage at <http://www.state.tn.us/tccy/ccmh-home.shtml>.